

## **PANDEMIC UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

Updated 9.23.2020

#### **Who is eligible for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance benefits?**

Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) is a benefit available for those who are out of work and are self-employed or others whose employment or employer does not contribute taxes towards traditional unemployment; such as independent contractors and those working for exempt religious institutions.

Those that are eligible for traditional unemployment benefits, or extended unemployment benefits are not eligible for PUA benefits.

In addition, if you are unable to work due to COVID-19 you may be eligible. Below are some examples:

- You have been diagnosed with COVID-19
- A member of your household has been diagnosed with COVID-19
- You are providing care to a household or family member who has been diagnosed with COVID-19

#### **How do I know if I should apply for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance or traditional unemployment benefits?**

If you are an employee working for an employer, in most instances you will need to apply for traditional unemployment. If you are self employed you should apply for pandemic unemployment. Only individuals who are out of work due to COVID-19 may be eligible for pandemic unemployment.

#### **If I am receiving traditional unemployment benefits am I also eligible for this benefit?**

No, this benefit is only considered when an individual is determined to be ineligible for both traditional and extended unemployment.

#### **If I have already applied for unemployment, should I also apply for this benefit?**

No, you should not apply for this benefit if you have a pending application for unemployment. If you have applied for and did not qualify or were denied for traditional unemployment benefits, then you should apply for pandemic unemployment, if you are out of work due to COVID-19. If you are receiving traditional unemployment insurance benefits, you may not apply and will not be eligible for this benefit.

#### **Am I eligible for pandemic unemployment if my work allows me to telework for pay?**

No, if you have the ability to telework and be paid the same as you have customarily worked prior to the COVID19 pandemic, then you are not eligible for pandemic unemployment.

#### **If I am receiving paid sick leave or other paid leave, am I eligible for pandemic unemployment?**

No, if you are on paid leave you are considered employed.

#### **What information will I need to provide to be able to apply for pandemic unemployment benefits?**

It is recommended you have the following information when you file:

- Your Social Security Number
- If you were employed:

- 2019 W-2s for all employers you worked for during that year
- If you were self-employed:
  - All 2019 Form 1099s; and
  - Schedule C from your 2019 tax return
  - All 2019 Form 1065s
  - General Ledger
  - Check Register
- Your State Driver's License or Identification card, if you have one
- Your Alien Registration Documentation, if you are not a U.S. citizen but are legally authorized to work in the United States
- Your highest 2019 Quarter earnings.
  - If you are not able to provide this then you will need to take your total net (after deductions) earnings for 2019 and divide by 4.

**If I do not provide accurate information on my application, will I have to repay the benefits received?**

Yes. As with any unemployment claim, you are required to provide accurate information or face penalties including denial of benefits and repayment of benefits.

**When will I start to get pandemic unemployment benefits, and how will I know if I am approved?**

After you apply for benefits you will be notified whether you are eligible or not. If eligible you will be required to file weekly claims to receive benefits.

As this is a new system payment of benefits may be delayed until the system has been fully developed. We will send weekly emails to keep you informed on our progress.

**Will I need to file a weekly claim while receiving pandemic unemployment?**

Yes, you will need to file weekly claims to receive weekly payments. Those weekly claims can be filed from [jobs.utah.gov](https://jobs.utah.gov) and selecting 'my Job Search'. You must begin to file a weekly claim the Sunday following your initial claim and every week thereafter while you are unemployed.

**What if I am receiving pandemic unemployment and become eligible for a new traditional unemployment insurance claim?**

If you are receiving pandemic unemployment and become eligible for a new traditional unemployment insurance claim, you will no longer be eligible for pandemic unemployment.

**What information will I need to provide for my weekly claims for pandemic unemployment benefits?**

It is recommended you have the following information when you file:

- Your Social Security Number
- Current mailing address
- Gross wages earned during the week, if any

**How will I receive my payments?**

Payments will be issued by paper checks. Payments by direct deposit or Utah debit card will not be available for pandemic unemployment at this time.

**Am I required to look for work?**

Starting September 27<sup>th</sup> 2020 unless you have qualifying COVID-19 deferral reasons, you are required to register for work and make a good faith effort to obtain employment.

**You should make at least four new full-time job contacts each week.** A job contact means a reasonable contact or action where a clear path to reemployment can be demonstrated, such as filling out an application, submitting a resume, networking, attending job related workshops, or interviews. A new contact means contacting an employer you have not contacted before, or contacting a previously contacted employer on a newly listed job opening. You are required to keep a detailed record of your work search activities. You may be selected at any time for an audit or eligibility review during which you will be asked to provide this information. Your record of employer contacts should include the following:

- Date of contact
- Name of company or other identifying information, such as job reference number
- Company address, phone number, email, web link, or person contacted
- Position title
- Method of contact
- Results of contact